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Fact Sheet

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S FY 1999 BUDGET: STRENGTHENING CIVIL RIGHTS PROTECTIONS

The President's FY 1999 budget reflects the Administration's strong commitment to equal opportunity for all Americans. USDA has embarked on an ambitious effort to put a history of discrimination behind it. Funding of \$249.8 million will enable the Department to continue dramatic improvements in its ability to serve all customers.

The FY 1999 budget:

- Proposes \$500 million for full funding of direct farm operating loans.
- Supports a direct farm ownership loan program of \$85 million, an increase of 85 percent from the FY 1998 level.
- Provides \$10 million to fully fund the Small Farmer Outreach and Technical Assistance Program to help teach farm management skills and techniques, develop customized farm plans, and implement farm record keeping systems.
- Continues a new livestock feed program targeting American Indian Tribes for emergency livestock feed assistance. This program will provide \$4 million in assistance for livestock feed losses caused by severe weather.
- Provides \$45 million for the Farm Labor Housing Program through the Rural Housing Service.
- Targets research, outreach, and technology transfer to meet the needs of small farms and improves small and minority farmers' access to USDA programs through the \$4 million Small Farms Research Initiative.
- Builds on advances made in recent years by continuing outreach and employee training efforts and through a strengthened Division of Civil Rights in the Office of the General Counsel.
- Increases funding by \$14 million to support data collection by NASS on pesticide usage in nursery and greenhouse crops, where the potential of farm worker exposure is high.